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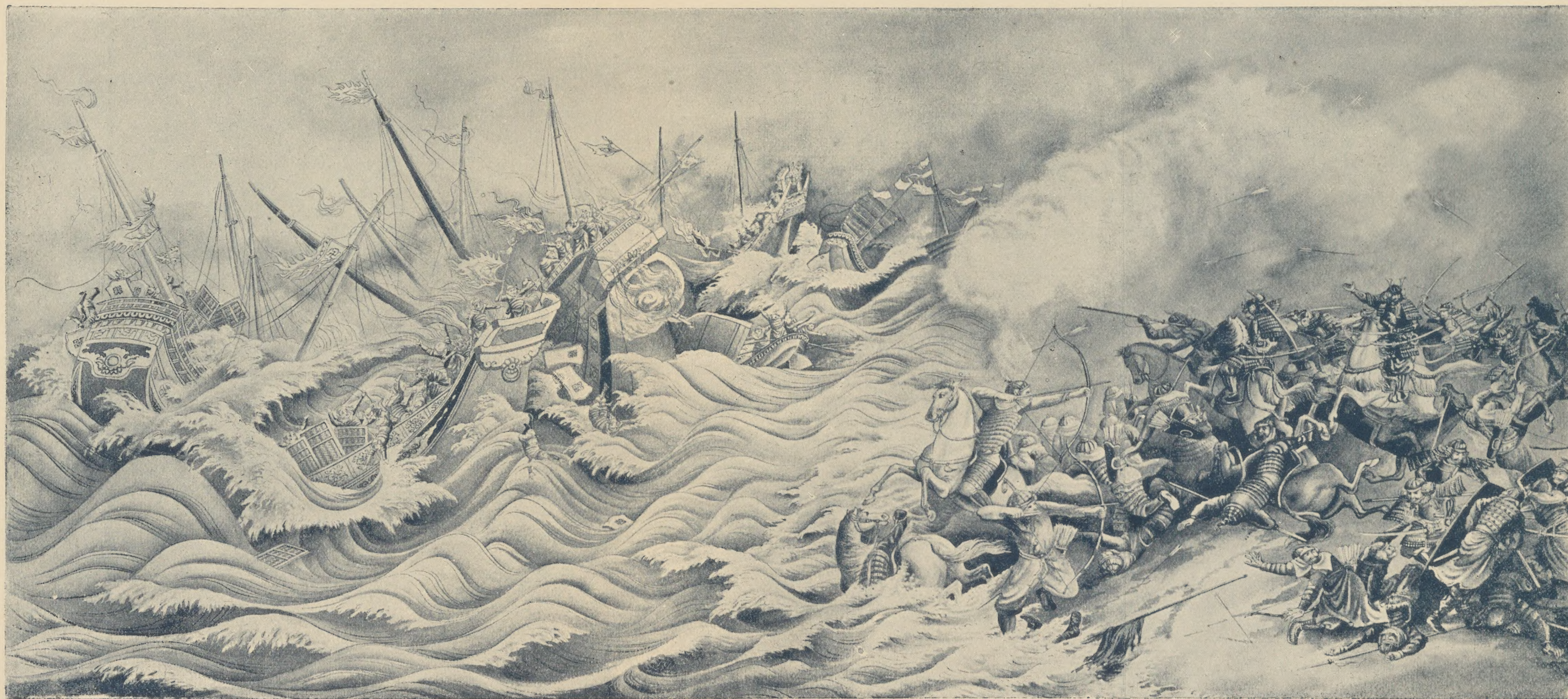
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THE REPULSE OF THE MONGOLIAN ARMADA BY THE JAPANESE FORCES (KAMAKURA ERA).







# NOTES ON THE MONGOL INVASION OF JAPAN.

BY J. E. DE BECKER.

“There is the moral of all human tales;  
’Tis but the same rehearsal of the past,  
And history, with all her volumes vast  
Hath but one page.”

When, in 1894, the World heard that Japan had declared war upon China it wondered at her hardihood in attacking her gigantic and apparently powerful neighbour, but astonishment turned into profound admiration when the little island Empire won battle after battle, brought the war to a steady close, and forced her antagonist to cede Formosa and pay a heavy indemnity.

But when, on the 9th February, 1904, the Japanese Squadron attacked the *Koreetz* and *Varyag* in Chemulpo, and on the following day the Emperor declared war against Russia, the World stood aghast to even think of the audacity of the proceeding.

Here was a Liliputian State rashly courting the destruction of its national existence, for how could it ever hope to hold its own against—let alone overcome—a great European power like the Northern Colossus!

“I am sorry this should have happened,” remarked an American friend, “for the Japanese cannot possibly hold their own against Russia. It was all very well in the case of China, but with Russia it is totally different. Look at the relative strength and wealth of the two countries, and consider the different physique of the people. The Russians are good fighters and great strapping fellows who can eat up these little Japanese soldiers. Why the Japs would have no chance in a bayonet charge! Besides, the Russian population is so enormous that they can crush Japan by mere weight of numbers, and their wealth and credit is such that Japan will become bankrupt in the struggle. It is awfully plucky of Japan, but it’s like an insect biting at an elephant. I hope they will come



out of it well, but am afraid that this time they have allowed their ambition to run away with their common sense, that they've bitten off more than they can swallow, and that they will get it in the neck!"

Well, my friend's ideas were typical of the prevailing opinion among many foreigners; but the expression of his gloomy forebodings only brought a smile to my face, for I realized the tremendous reserve power of the nation and the warlike and patriotic spirit of the people. . . My mind reverted to the history of the times of Kublai Khan and his great armada, and I felt certain this war would be but a rehearsal of the past and result in victory. That the Russians were a formidable foe I was well aware, but then I was conscious of the fact that the nation stood in a solid phalanx behind the Throne, that the hearts of the Japanese were beating as unitedly and loyally as of yore, that the most ardent love of country protected the Empire as with a vast shield impenetrable, and that no foe could ever set foot upon these shores with impunity while a man was left to shoulder a gun or wield a sword! I knew how badly the Japanese had taken Russia's interference after the war with China and the deep resentment felt for that insult to their national pride, and I was aware that for ten years past every nerve had been strained to prepare for a grand day of reckoning. I had watched the gathering of the recruits, marked their martial ardour and heard their inspiring war-songs, I had seen the flag of the Rising Sun flying proudly over every house in the land from the palace of the prince of the tiny hut of the peasant, and I knew that all was well. I recollected the saying of a dear old poet friend (whose only son fell at Port Arthur) — "*The Russians will have to fight not only with the living, but the dead, for be sure the spirits of our ancestors will be with us in legions on the battle field and nerve our arms,*"\* and re-

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\* "Perhaps by Western people it is thought that the dead never return. We cannot so think. There are no Japanese dead who do not return. There are none who do not know the way. From China and from Chosen, and out of the bitter sea, all our dead have come back,—*all!* They are with us now. In every dusk they gather to hear the bugles that called them home. And they will hear them also in that day when the armies of the Son of Heaven shall be summoned against Russia."

(A remark quoted by the late Lafcadio Hearn in "*Kokoro*"—chapter 6—written in 1895.

The utterance was well nigh prophetic!)



membering the intense earnestness of his words, was convinced that this quaint belief would be shared by the members of the Japanese army, and insure a glorious triumph for the Imperial forces.

Then in rapid succession came the torpedo-boat attacks off Port Arthur and the blockade of that port, the battles of the Yalu, of Nanshan, Liao-yang, Sha-ho; the reduction of Port Arthur, and the battle of Mukden, and at last the eyes of the surprised World were opened as to the military capabilities of the Japanese.

And yet, the probable outcome of the struggle was clearly foreseen by those who had taken the pains to study the pages of Far-Eastern history, and observed the extraordinary phenomena of Japanese social conditions and character. The race possesses a contempt for death, an inherent genius for military achievement which has been developed and disciplined during the course of many centuries, and, above all, great latent virility and a marvellous spirit of unquenchable patriotism which makes the Japanese armies invincible when appealed to by the revered Imperial Father.

Nearly six and a half centuries ago the national existence of Japan was threatened by one of the greatest conquerors in history—Kublai Khan—but in spite of the most fearful odds, his Mongol hordes were utterly exterminated by the Japanese forces under the direction of the famous Kamakura Regent—Hōjō Tokimuné.

The story of the repulse of Kublai Khan's great armada is both interesting and instructive, for it throws side-lights upon the history of recent times and clearly proves that the indomitable courage which we have seen so conspicuously displayed in the late war is indeed but the heritage received from their heroic ancestors by the present generation of Japanese—a manifestation of the imperishable race Soul of Great Japan!

After inflicting a severe castigation upon the memory of the Hōjō family, and holding them up to the scorn and execration of all loyal subjects as an ugly brood of "serpents, fiends and traitors," in his *Nihon Gwaishi*, Rai Sanyo (the historian) says:—"The repulse of the Tartar barbarians by Tokimuné, and his preserving the dominions of our Son of Heaven, were sufficient to atone for the crimes of his ancestors."



This grudging tribute to Hōjō Tokimuné—one of the greatest spirits of his age—is indeed well deserved, for had it not been for his statesman-like sagacity and intrepid courage, Japan might have sunk to the position of a mere tributary and effete state, and been entirely submerged and lost in the darkness of barbarism.

In a moment of supreme danger, when the weak and vacillating Court nobles were meditating the despatch of a letter to Kublai Khan which would have led to virtual political effacement and suicide, it was the youthful but lion-hearted Tokimuné who stepped resolutely into the breach, and, by the force of his own heroic personality, saved the country from humiliation and disaster.

Upon the death of his father, Hōjō Tokimuné succeeded to the office of *Shikken* (Regent) at Kamakura, was granted the lower class of the fifth rank, created Lord of Sagami, and appointed a master of the Horse. As he was only thirteen years of age at the time of his father's death, the young Regent was assisted in the administration of the *Shōgunate* (Military) Government by his uncles.

In illustration of the firm and resolute disposition and tenacity of purpose which characterized young Tokimuné, the following story is told about an episode in his life.

In the era of Kōchō (1261 to 1264), when Tokimuné was only eleven years old, a grand exhibition of archery was held in the grounds of the *Gokuraku-ji* in Kamakura, when the *Shōgun* † (Prince Munetaka) expressed a wish to witness the game of shooting at a small hat-target (*ogasagake*), and ordered his attendants to set up the target forthwith. Those present were then invited to try their skill, but the target being small and difficult to hit, no one ventured to accept the challenge until Hōjō Tokiyori (the Regent) stood up and said—“Methinks my son Tarō (Tokimuné) has some skill in this art, so let him try his luck.” Upon being summoned, Tokimuné, boy though he was, let fly a shaft and pierced the bulls-eye at the first essay. The lad's feat drew forth thunders of applause from the assembled multitude, and his father exclaimed—“The child will assuredly be fit to bear the burden of his exalted station.”

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† *Shōgun*. The military head of the State in feudal times.



In the fifth year of *Bun-ei* (1268) Tokimuné attained his eighteenth year, and, assuming the reins of government himself, attended personally to all political affairs. In January 1268 an envoy named Hampu (潘阜 a Corean) arrived at Dazaifu, the Governor-generalate of Kyūshū, bringing a letter from Kublai Kahn, the great Mongol autocrat, the ostensible object of the communication being to establish amicable relations between the two countries. The coming of this embassy caused considerable anxiety, Court circles being greatly perturbed on account of its arrival.

In order that the position of political affairs of that age may be understood, it is necessary to review the relations which had existed between China and Japan for some centuries preceding the arrival of Kublai Khan's messenger.

While a certain amount of intercourse had been kept up with China by traders, priests and scholars, no inter-governmental relations had existed for nearly four hundred years because the Japanese Government had ceased sending envoys in 894 owing to disputes among the Chinese, the subsequent fall of the *Tang* Dynasty, and a succession of political changes and disturbances. Several overtures had been made by the *Sung* Emperors to re-establish official relations, but nothing came of the negotiations and gradually the power of the *Sung* Dynasty declined.

In Mongolia, on the north-east of China, there had appeared a conqueror of world-wide fame, Temujin (Tetsuboku-shin), who, after subjugating the neighbouring countries, eventually usurped possession of nearly the whole of China, and, styling himself Genghis Khan ("The King of Kings") planned to conquer the entire World. Against his armies the Tartar Kings were unable to hold their ground, and ultimately the wave of Mongol conquest flowed into the dominions of the *Sung* sovereign in the south of China, and it has been said that not a country from the Euxine to the China Sea escaped the tramp of the Mongol horsemen.

After achieving wonders, Genghis Khan died on or about the 29th August 1227, but his grandson Koppiretsu (忽必烈 Kublai) inherited an insatiable love of conquest, and longed to realize his grandfather's dream of an Empire co-extensive with the globe. His first step towards consummating his design was to subjugate Corea on the East and the Kingdom



of Sung on the South, after which he attacked Europe and eventually conquered the eastern countries of that Continent. Having concerted measures for overthrowing the *Sung* Dynasty and bringing all China under Mongol rule, he conceived the project of subjugating Japan also.

In the third year of *Bun-ei* (1266) Kublai despatched envoys to Japan *via* Corea, with the object of bringing the Japanese within the sphere of his influence, but these envoys did not prosecute their mission as the Coreans pointed out the difficulty of the voyage and expatiated on the inaccessibility of the island Empire. In the fifth year of *Bun-ei* (1268), as we have seen, Kublai sent another embassy to Dazaifu in *Kyūshū*, and at the same time he ordered the vassal king of Corea to collect naval and military forces and to hold them disposable for his service.

Upon the arrival of Kublai's envoy, the officials at Dazaifu were much perplexed as to what course of action they should pursue, and reported the matter to the Kamakura Military Government. On receipt of the news, the Kamakura authorities decided that, as the situation was serious, it would be better to transmit the document to the Imperial Court at Kyōtō for the consideration of the Emperor, and it was accordingly sent on to His Majesty. Now it so happened that just when the despatch reached Kyōtō, the City was *en fête* in honour of the birth-day of the ex-Emperor Gosaga. The Court musicians played their sweetest airs, and the sound of music and rejoicing was heard in every corner of the old capital; but the receipt of Kublai's letter changed all this in the twinkling of an eye, the joyous voices were hushed, and, as the news leaked out, the faces of the people who heard it grew sad and anxious, for they remembered how the Holy Nichiren of Idzu had prophesied a foreign invasion as a punishment for their sins.

The Imperial Court desired to answer the letter, and, after consultation, the Emperor Kameyama ordered a reply to be drafted by Sugawara Naganari and fairly copied by Sesonji Tsunetomo. This reply was then transmitted to Kamakura in order that it might be perused by the Military Government there previous to despatch. Tokimuné, considering that the tone of Kublai's letter was insolent, and being greatly irritated in consequence, expressed himself as entirely opposed to even



answering it, so it was finally determined to leave it unanswered. This decision was reported to Dazaifu and the Mongol Emperor's envoy sent away. The text of the letter from the Mongols ran thus\* :—

(We) by the Grace and decree of Heaven,  
*Emperor* of Great Mongolia,  
 Present a letter to  
 The *King* of Japan.

We have pondered (over the fact) that from ancient time even the princes of *small states* strove to cultivate friendly intercourse with those of adjoining territories.

To how much greater an extent did Our ancestors, who received the Middle Empire by the inscrutable decrees of Heaven, become known in numerous far-off foreign lands, all of whom revered their power and majesty !

When We first ascended Our throne, many innocent persons of Kōrai were suffering from (the effects of) continuous war. Thereupon we put an end to the fighting, restored their territories, and liberated the captives both old and young. Both the prince of Koma and his people, feeling grateful towards Us, visited Our country, and *while the relation between Us and them is that of Lord and vassal*, its nature is as felicitous as that of parent and child, and of this, no doubt, you O King are well aware.

Koma is situated on the eastern border of Our dominions, Japan is near to it, and ever since communication was opened with Koma intercourse has, from time to time, been carried on with China also.

Since the commencement of Our reign not a single messenger of peace and friendship has appeared, and as We fear that your country is not fully acquainted with these facts, We have specially sent a messenger bearing a letter to inform you O *King* of Our sentiments.

We beg that hereafter you O *King* will establish friendly relations with us so that the sages may make the four seas (the World) their home.

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\* (It will be observed that the Khan uses the word *Emperor*, (皇帝) which is the highest title of sovereignty, in speaking of himself, while he addresses the Japanese Emperor as *King* (王) which is the title of a ruler of a (Chinese) country inferior in rank. By analogy he hints at Japan being on a par with Corea—his *vassal* State—and clearly throws out a veiled threat of making war if his proposals are not accepted).



Is it reasonable to refuse intercourse with each other? *It will lead to war*, and who is there who likes such a state of things!

Think of this O *King*!

8th month of the 3rd year of Shi-gen.

Kublai Khan had calculated that Japan, being a little island, would be awed into submission by the very prestige of his name, but, contrary to his expectations, found that the country could not be conquered by mere blustering and was resolved not to yield to his pretensions. Thereupon he changed his tactics, and in the third month of the sixth year of Bun-ei (April 1269) sent a small expedition under the Generals Koku-teki (黑的) and Inkō (般弘) to the island of Tsushima. The governor of that island, who had received previous instructions from Tokimuné, refused to allow the members of the armed embassy to land, thus precipitating a conflict which resulted in victory for the Mongolians. The enemy then withdrew, carrying away with them two natives named Yajirō and Tōjiro respectively. These men were taken before Kublai, who treated the prisoners most graciously, entertaining them hospitably and kindly. After they had been shown all the glories of his magnificent palace, and duly impressed by the sight of his treasures and the gorgeous splendour of his court, the Khan sent them back to Japan in charge of some Coreans with strict injunctions to represent to the Japanese Emperor how futile would be any attempt to thwart the desires of the great Mongol chieftain.

In the second month of the eighth year of Bun-ei (March 1271) another envoy named Chō-ryō-hitsu (趙良弼 Chiū Liungpat) was ordered to sail for Japan with a force of three thousand men, but thinking it better policy to take a small retinue only and try diplomatic methods, he arrived at Imadzu, in Chikuzen Province, in company with a Corean named Joshō (徐稱) and several secretaries and other attendants. Representing to the Deputy Governor-General of Kyūshū that he carried an important letter from his master which needed an answer, he declared that he would deliver the despatch to the Emperor or *Shōgun* personally. Finally, however, Chō-ryō-hitsu was prevailed upon to deliver a copy of the letter which he carried for transmission to Kamakura, and he intimated that if an answer was not forthcoming his master would declare



war; but upon its receipt by Tokimune, the latter ordered the envoy to be instantly deported, and issued imperative instructions for active preparations to be commenced forthwith.

Chō-ryō-hitsu, smarting under the insult which had been put upon him, used the Koreans as intermediaries for the purpose of influencing the Japanese to yield to the Mongol authority, but without success. He then persuaded Kublai Khan to fit out a fleet of more than nine hundred war-junks carrying several thousand men. These under the command of a general named Kosakyū, attacked the islands of Tsushima and Iki in the tenth month of the eleventh year of Bun-ei (November 1274).

Sō no Sukekuni (宗助國), Governor (Warden?) of Tsushima, and Taira Kagetaka (平景隆) Governor (Warden?) of Iki, at the head of less than two hundred natives, made a most obstinate defence, but, after a fierce and bloody engagement, the Japanese were defeated with immense slaughter, and the islands passed into the possession of the enemy. No sooner had they subjugated the islands than the Mongolian warriors gave full vent to their savage and cruel instincts, killing the farmers, burning and pillaging their houses, and ravishing the women; and Japanese history avers that many of the unfortunate female captives had holes pierced in the palms of their hands, through which ropes were drawn, and that some of the foreign soldiers even ripped open the abdomens of dead Japanese warriors and feasted on their vitals!

A report of the disaster having reached Dazaifu and Kamakura, Hōjō Tokimune issued an urgent order to mobilise the Japanese forces. This was carried out with great celerity, and within a few days an army numbering over one hundred thousand men had rallied under the flag in the provinces of Chikuzen and Hizen. Hardly had preparations been completed when news arrived that the enemy had effected a landing at Imatsu, so the troops marched hastily to that place to repel the invasion, and upon encountering the enemy fought a terrific battle which lasted for several hours.

Brave as the Japanese soldiers were, they were, to a certain extent, placed at a disadvantage, because the forces of the enemy consisted of experienced and seasoned troops who were thoroughly acquainted with military tactics and armed with poisoned arrows and primitive cannon. Again and again



the Japanese rushed impetuously upon their enemies, brandishing their long razor-like blades, but the pitiless hail of poisoned arrows, and the projectiles from the guns forced them to retire, while the deafening thunder of the Mongol cannon, the roll of their war-drums and tom-toms, and the sight of the forest of flapping flying banners terrorized the cavalry of the defenders and made the horses restive and unmanageable. At that time the Japanese were not only entirely ignorant of the use of fire-arms, but had not even heard about them, and notwithstanding their reckless bravery there was something in these fire-vomiting engines of destruction which was uncanny and struck them with dismay. While the battle was still raging, one of their great generals, Ryū fuku-kō (劉復亨) who wore a red colored helmet, was shot by Kagesuke, son of the Deputy Governor-General of Dazaifu. The arrow struck the general on the fore-head, causing him to fall from his horse, but he was rescued and carried away by his men. About this time the evening was closing in, but as the enemy had set fire to a wayside house, the lurid glare of the flames lit up the landscape and could be seen as far as the shrine of Hakozaiki. Perceiving that their troops were wavering, the Japanese Generals retreated to the castle of Mizuki and prepared for a seige. This fortress had originally been built by the Emperor Tenji (天智) for the purpose of providing against a threatened Korean invasion, and had been only recently repaired and strongly fortified by Hōjō Tokimuné. The enemy made some attempt to carry the place by assault, but finding the defences proof against their attacks, and fearing a *sortie* from the garrison under the cover of the darkness, they retreated to their ships utterly worn out with fatigue.

That night a terrific storm arose which dragged the vessels from their moorings and did incalculable damage to the fleet. Early the next morning, when the tempest had subsided and the waves became calmer, the enemy, greatly disheartened, drew off and set sail for home, the astonished Japanese only seeing one of the flying war-junks passing the island of Shiga-jima.

This expedition had cost the lives of thirteen thousand soldiers to the forces of Kublai Khan, and while he had practically defeated the Japanese, the would-be autocrat was taught that he could not conquer the bold islanders after the manner of other subject nations.



Despite the ill-success of the attempted invasion, after the discomfited Chō-ryō-hitsu had returned with the remnant of his ships, Kublai Khan began to plan a new method of subjugating the obstinate little island Empire. He reasoned that although his fleet had been driven by the forces of nature, his warriors had scored successes on land sufficient to make the Japanese army respect and fear the Mongolian power, and he persuaded himself that now they knew the strength of his arms they might perhaps surrender if another envoy was sent to Japan.

Full of this thought, the Khan, in the fourth month of the 1st year of Kenji (April 1275) instructed Toseichū (杜清忠 To Sechung) Kabuncho, (何文著) and others—in all five persons—to proceed to Japan for the purpose of obtaining an answer. This embassy duly arrived at the province of Chikuzen and explained their errand, but the officials of the Dazaifu local government refused to receive them and urged them to return. The messengers were obstinate and would take no denial, so the matter was reported to Kamakura for instructions. Tokimuné immediately ordered the members of the embassy to be brought to the Eastern capital, and they secretly rejoiced at their approaching interview with the Shōgun, which they had been told was against the national law and customs. But their joy was short-lived, for no sooner had they arrived in Kamakura (in the 9th month) than they were treated as spies and hurried to the common execution ground at Tatsu-no-kuchi at Katasé and there beheaded, their heads being exposed to public view, like those of ordinary malefactors, near the sea shore at Yui-ga-hama!

After the lapse of another two years, an envoy named Shufuku (周福 Cheu Fuh) arrived from Mongolia, but he had no sooner appeared in Dazaifu than he and his suite also were seized and beheaded; and Tokimuné, perceiving that the Khan had not yet abandoned his ambitious designs on Japan, caused Hōjō Sanemasa, the Vice-Count (*Suke*) of Kadzusa, to be Governor (*Tandai*) of Chinzei (Kyūshū) and despatching some eastern troops to protect the capital, made all necessary military preparations to defend the entire country. The castle of Dazaifu was enlarged, the finances of the Empire carefully adjusted, and everything put in readiness to repel a foreign attack.

Kublai's reason for sending so many successive envoys was that he desired to make himself acquainted with Japanese customs, manners, and social conditions, and spy out the geographical features of the country. Besides, for the time being he was fully occupied in subduing the Kingdom of *Sung* and could not send any considerable force across the sea to avenge his unfortunate messengers, so he waited a more favourable opportunity to attack Japan. It did not take long for the shrewd Tokimuné to sum up the situation, and perceiving that it would be a gain to the country to tempt the Khan to divide his forces, he deliberately put the various messengers to death as a species of challenge to declare war.

When Kublai Khan heard of Shufuku's tragic end he became frantic with rage, and set to work with a will to organize a navy calculated to crush the Japanese once for all. Some four thousand four hundred war-junks of great size and strength were prepared, armed, victualled and manned by a hundred and forty thousand Chinese Mongol and Corean troops, and in the fourth year of Kōan (1281)—one year after the subjugation of *Sung*—the great armada was ready to sail from Corea under the Command of the General Han-Bun-Kō (范文虎 Ten-Wen-hu).

The Japanese soon got wind of the forthcoming attack, and the whole country rose to the occasion as one man. High and low, rich and poor, old and young came forward and vied with each other in making offers of service, and in every shrine and temple in the State prayers were offered for the safety of the Empire.

In the midst of all this toil and turmoil, the indomitable Hōjō Tokimuné, as befitted his rank and station, stood like a tower of strength in the land, and after thinking out and arranging every detail of the defence issued a proclamation appealing to the patriotism of the entire nation. In it he stated that all military preparations had been perfected, but that the situation was critical and it was of course impossible to foresee the result of the impending conflict. Should the Kyūshū army happen to suffer defeat, the Rokuhara army would march to Kyūshū, while he (Tokimuné) would go to Kyōtō to protect the reigning Emperor and the Prince Imperial, the two retired Emperors (Gosaga and Kameyama) proceeding to the Eastern provinces. Those in the army were reminded that their duty



was to fight to the death for their country, while the ordinary citizens were enjoined to practice economy to the end that sufficient funds might be collected to prosecute the war to a successful issue. The proclamation wound up by referring with pride, to the war-like exploits of the ancient Empress Jingō (神功), the conqueress of Corea, and asked how would the people of Japan be able to face their ancestors should they be disgracefully defeated by the barbarian forces !

The effect of this proclamation was excellent, for it aroused the patriotic sentiments of all classes, making the people so indignant with the Mongols that they wept tears of rage and braced themselves up for a supreme national effort against the barbarian invaders.

On the 21st day of the 5th month (30th May 1281) the Mongolian armada appeared off the coast of Iki and Tsushima, and landing a party of soldiers either cruelly massacred or captured the bulk of the population. Some of the inhabitants, it is true, escaped into the mountains, and many killed their own young children to prevent the chance of their whereabouts being betrayed by the cries of the infants.

The news of this disaster soon reached the capital and gave rise to numberless extravagant rumours which produced a panic among the populace. Some reported that the enemy had landed at Nagato and were now marching towards the capital, some stated that a curious monster had been seen in the heavens travelling from the South towards the North, some said that sacred horses had been observed fighting together in the sky, while others shook their heads and gravely announced that portents of a great natural calamity were plainly visible. Such was the effect of the universal scare that all work and business was suspended, and the transportation of rice and other cereals stopped in Kyūshū. This nearly produced a food famine in the Capital even before the enemy had really landed, and to avert the national danger the ex-Emperor Kameyama indited an autographic prayer to be offered to the Gods of the Shrine of Isé. Throughout the length and breadth of the land could be heard the tapping and roll of temple drums, the tinkling of sacred bells, the rustle of the sleeves of vestal dancers, and the litanies of priests ; while in thousands of temples the wood-fire used in the *goma* rite was kept burning, and the smoke of incense ascended perpetually.

On the fifth day of the sixth month, the enemy appeared at the offing near Hakata, and seizing the islands of Genkai, Shiga and Noko in turn proceeded to attack Hakata.

Previous to the arrivals of the Mongols, Hōjō Sanémasa had constructed stone fortifications of 25 feet in height for several *ri* along the coast of Hakozaki and Hakata, in front of which were placed thousands of irregular posts or stakes so arranged as to form stockades and impede a landing of the enemy, while the Japanese forces, who manned the summit of the ramparts both on foot and horse, could discharge arrows at the invaders from behind screen-like shields contrived for the protection of the defenders. This method of defence was adopted owing to the experience gained in the Bun-ei era (1264 to 1274), as it was considered essential to prevent the enemy from being able to look down into the Japanese encampment. Seeing the preparations made for their reception, the Mongols constructed high bridge-like towers on their vessels, and were thus enabled to thwart Sanemasa's plans and command a view of his forces.

Notwithstanding all their endeavours, the defenders were at a considerable disadvantage, because their weapons were greatly inferior in every respect, and the heavy armour of the invaders protected them against the arrows of the Japanese. The beseigers were armed with powerful cross-bows which they handled with great skill and effect, and, to crown all, their cannon were trained upon the walls and belched forth death to the beseiged. It is true that the fire-arms used were of a very primitive sort, but the projectiles employed set fire to the wooden shields on the ramparts, and the smoke and flames blinded and scorched the beleaguered garrison. The Japanese were indeed in a sorry plight, but, trusting in the unseen help of the Gods, they attacked the enemy at the island of Shiga, and for many days the terrible battle raged almost without intermission.

One night, one of Sanemasa's Generals, taking advantage of the darkness, secretly attacked the enemy with two boats, and after having killed more than twenty of the crew of one of the junks, set the vessel on fire and retired. This episode rather upset the Mongols as they had not anticipated such an attack, knowing that the Japanese were practically without any boats except small fishing-craft. They now ranged their



great fighting ships in line and fastened them together with iron chains, laying planks from vessel to vessel until the fleet resembled a vast floating island. When the small Japanese boats attempted operations, the enemy discharged catapults from their decks, so the attacks invariably failed and many soldiers lost their lives. After several failures, the Japanese Inspector-General—Morimuné—absolutely prohibited single attacks, but the officers and men, in their excess of loyal zeal and bravery, disobeyed the order, and from time to time a boat bearing a cutting-out party would steal out and make an onset upon the enemy.

Kōnō Michiari, who was distinguished for his courage and daring, infringed the general order by taking out two boats and with them recklessly attacking the enemy's fleet. The Mongols repelled him with a shower of arrows and stones which fell among his men and killed several on the spot. His uncle Michitoki was seriously wounded, but Michiari had no time to attend to his relative's hurts, and continued to advance with great energy. An arrow struck him in the left shoulder, and, while the wound was not dangerous, it disabled him from using his bow. Nothing daunted, he flung away the bow, and, brandishing his sword in his right hand, pressed forward until his boat nearly touched the side of the enemy's ship. He now found that the Mongol war-junks stood so high out of the water that he could not reach the decks. In an instant a bright idea flashed through his mind, and cutting down his own mast he used it as a ladder to enable him and his followers to scramble on board the nearest ship. Having obtained a footing, a fierce hand-to-hand combat ensued, and after killing a number of the enemy Michiari managed to capture a high officer wearing a jewelled helmet (Wang Kuan?) and carry him off. Several other Japanese officers attacked the fleet in a similar manner, and alarmed by these sudden and unexpected onslaughts, the Mongolians separated their ships, weighed anchor, and retired to Takashima in Hizen Province.

Tokimuné now sent Utsunomiya Sadatsuné, at the head of some troops from the midland countries, to Kyūshū to aid Hōjō Sanemasa, and ordered the forces at Rokuhara to be in readiness to take the field at any moment.

In the Imperial Court great anxiety was felt, the Emperor, retired Emperors, and the Crown Prince being so disquieted

by the danger threatening the State that they neglected their meals and suffered from insomnolence. The retired Emperor Kameyaya, being earnestly solicitous for the safety of the country, proceeded to the Hachiman shrine at Iwashimidzu where he kept vigil for a whole night praying for the success of the national arms. Not only did he do this, but he despatched Fujiwara Tsuneto, the assistant First Adviser of State, to the shrines at Ise to offer up an autographic prayer beseeching the Gods to even accept his own life as a sacrifice for the sake of the Empire if necessary.

On the night of the 30th day of the 6th month (7th July 1281) the sky suddenly became overcast, a great typhoon began to blow from the north-west, and the 1st day of the 7th month it had gathered terrible force. The world was wrapped in darkness, the surging waters of the ocean rose like mountains, the thunder roared and rolled, the lightnings flashed and raged, the rain descended in torrential sheets, the wild winds shrieked and howled in impetuous fury, and it seemed as if the very elements were struggling together in angry and demoniac warfare. Catching the full force of the frightful hurricane, the iron chains which linked the Mongol ships together strained and snapped and the great fleet was scattered on the roaring, heaving ocean like the leaves of the autumn. Sails were torn to shreds, masts broken, hulls crushed and damaged, and rudders rendered useless. Tossing helplessly on the foaming billows, and drifting at the mercy of the winds and waves, the colossal ships of the once proud armada were gradually broken up and disappeared, some being driven on the treacherous rocks and dashed to pieces by the awful breakers and others being torn asunder and engulfed in the fierce waters which yawned around them like the inexorable jaws of hell. When the morning dawned it was discovered that more than a hundred thousand of the enemy's troops had found a watery grave off the Japanese coasts, and that only a miserable remnant of the Mongol fleet had weathered the storm; and for weeks afterwards the neighbouring shores were strewn with wreckage and the corpses of the dead. The survivors of the tempest, to the number of several thousand, managed to reach Takashima where they endeavoured to repair some of their damaged ships with the object of escaping to their own country. Thereupon Kagesuké attacked them with great vigour, and utterly exterminated them with the exception of three souls, who were



allowed to return to China to tell the mournful tale to their master the Khan.

Upon hearing the news, Kublai was beside himself with rage and set energetically to work to equip a fresh navy with the intention of wiping out the disgrace of his defeat, but difficulties cropped up, mutinies arose, and his own Prime Minister Lieousiuen protested against and opposed his plans. Finally in 1286, the haughty Khan had to relinquish all further designs on Japan, and confess that, on the sea at least, the Mongols were no match even for this little Island Empire. From that day to this, during more than six centuries, no foreign power except Russia has ever attempted to invade Japan, and the whole World is aware of the tragic fate of Admiral Rojestvensky's fleet in the Sea of Japan on the 27th and 28th of May 1905 !

In the 7th year of Kōan (1284) Hōjō Tokimuné died at the early age of thirty-four, so it would almost seem as if he had been born for the sole purpose of preserving his country by repelling the Mongol invaders. At the age of thirteen he had been appointed Regent, at eighteen he had personally assumed the direction of State affairs, at twenty-five he caused the Envoy Toseichū to be put to death, at the age of twenty-nine he executed the last Envoy Shūfuku, at thirty-one he annihilated the Mongolian armada and freed Japan from danger, and three short years afterwards breathed his last.

On the 12th May, 1905, in accordance with Japanese custom and precedent, and to the great satisfaction of the nation, His Majesty the Emperor was graciously pleased to specially confer signal honour upon Hōjō Tokimuné by posthumously elevating the heroic Regent to the Second Grade of the First Rank.

When we consider the repulse of the Mongol armada in 1281 and of the great Russian fleet in 1905, it is impossible not to be impressed with the truth of Rai Sanyō's significant remark in the 4th volume of the *Nihon Gwashi*—"From this I learn that the secret of victory or defeat lies in the spirit of the men, and not in their weapons. We have a quality in which we naturally excel, and in that we should put our trust." ! \*

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\* "Ware koko wo motte shiru hei no shōhai wa hito ni atte ki ni arazu. Waga chōgi onodzukara aru ari, tanomu beshi to nasu nari."

There is one remarkable phenomenon connected with the history of the Mongolian invasion, and that is the attitude of the Buddhist and Shintō priesthood. It is interesting and instructive to notice that, notwithstanding separation by seas and continents and differences in race and religious ideas, all human beings invariably turn for help towards some higher power in times of impending danger. The very existence in their language of the well-known proverb *kurushii toki no kamidanomi* † (praying to the deity in the hour of distress) clearly reveals the fact that the idea of calling upon an unseen and mightier power when assailed by perils which mankind believe themselves incapable of averting by their own exertions, is as much ingrained in the Japanese as in any other race. The acute danger in which the Empire was placed by the threatening forces of Kublai Khan developed the latent religious instincts of the country, and producing a searching after supernatural assistance bred a spirit of rank superstition in the Japanese which was taken gross advantage of by the priesthood. The entire population was so scared and terrified by the position of affairs that all the people, from the highest to the lowest, fell an easy prey to the priestly jugglers who fattened on the credulity of their unhappy flocks. The Emperor himself did not escape the influence of his ghostly advisers, for he not only visited numerous shrines and temples in person to pray for the country, but despatched special messengers to shrines in more than sixty provinces to intercede with the deities for the national welfare. A demand having been created for miracles, the priests were not long in supplying the necessary quantity of wonders, and ere long the following phenomena were reported. It was stated (*inter alia*) that (1) a five-coloured cloud (*go-shiki no kumo*) had arisen from the surface of lake Suwa in Shinshū and assumed the form of a great serpent, that (2) the folding-doors (*tobira*) of the Hachiman shrine had flown open of their own accord and a host of sacred horses which issued from the sanctuary had made the air ring with the clatter and trampling of their hoofs and the jingling of their bridle-bits, that (3) in the shrine of Hiyoshi (at Sakamoto near Kyōtō) the sacred mirror had been moved, the sacred sword unsheathed, and the shoes of the god turned towards the west, that (4) the sacred horse of the Sumiyoshi shrine had

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† The meaning in general use is that of the English proverb—" *Danger past, God forgotten.*"



been seen restlessly pawing the ground and dripping with foam; and ornamental shields (*tatê*) of the *building had spontaneously turned in the direction of the enemy*, that (5) the doors of more than three thousand seven hundred shrines had been opened by invisible hands, and (6) that miraculous occurrences had taken place in twenty-two of the chief shrines throughout the Empire. Then it was rumoured that nearly all the people had been vouchsafed vivid allegorical dreams in which they had beheld the sacred deer of the Kasuga shrine at Nara, the sacred crows of the Kumano mountain, the white herons of the Kebi shrine, the sacred fox, of the Inari mountain, and the monkeys of the Hiei mountain, all travelling together in a westerly direction. This latter rumour started the whole population to pray for deliverance to the gods of these three shrines. The *Tai-hei-ki* is responsible for the story that on the 7th day of the 7th month of the fourth year of *Kōan* (13th July 1281†), Arakida Hisayoshi, priest of the Ise shrines, Watarai Sadahisa, priest of the Toyouke shrine, and twelve other Shintō priests, presented a signed document to the Emperor to the following effect:—"The lesser shrines (*massha*) of the two sanctuaries gave forth rumbling sounds and shook for some time, and at dawn on the 6th day a roseate cloud arose from the said shrines brightening heaven and earth, mountain and river. From the midst of the cloud appeared a foul-shaped demon, forbidding in appearance and green in colour. The demon loosened the mouth of a huge bag which he bore, and from it let forth blasts of hot wind which blew up sand and stones in showers and tore great trees up by their roots. These events we believe prognosticate the destruction of the barbarian enemy this very day. If this prophecy be fulfilled, we pray that the honour of an Imperial decree may be bestowed on our shrines."

In this manner the priests utilized their opportunity of strengthening their position by predicting victory and drawing vast sums of money for their services in offering intercessory prayers. When the forces of nature and the patriotic courage and indefatigable exertions of Tokimuné and his gallant soldiers had secured victory, the Buddhist priests and Shinto officials had the assurance to claim that the enemy had been overthrown by their mummery. By this means they established

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† This date appears erroneous.

the rule of priest-craft and extorted large rewards which greatly exceeded the monies granted to the generals and their troops, notwithstanding the fact that it was the latter who had borne the burden and heat of the day. There was a continual appeal for funds for "religious purposes," shrines and temples multiplied and flourished, and armies of unctuous churchmen grew fat and prospered as they gathered in the goodly golden harvest. These priestly *incubi* upon the body politic wormed their way into the councils of the State, and meddled in governmental affairs until the secular authorities were swayed by their wishes and the revenues of the country tapped for their benefit.

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